

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Cancelled).

Claim 2 (Currently Amended): A control device for a front-and-rear wheel drive vehicle for electrically controlling a driving power transmission device which is arranged on a driving power transmission path of said vehicle for transmitting the drive power from a power source to driven wheels as either of front wheels and rear wheels of said vehicle, said control device including:

switching control means for electrically controlling said driving power transmission device to switch the drive mode of said vehicle selectively ~~[[to]]~~ from a two-wheel drive mode ~~[[or]]~~ to a four-wheel drive mode;

means for determining a difference between a present torque which said driving power transmission device is transmitting and a target torque which said driving power transmission device is to transmit after the switching of said drive mode; and

gradual switching control means responsive to said difference determining means for electrically controlling said driving power transmission device to gradually change ~~decrease~~ the present torque to the target torque only when the difference between said present and target torques is more than a predetermined value at the time of the switching of said drive mode.

Claim 3 (Currently Amended): The control device for a front-and-rear wheel drive vehicle as set forth in Claim 2, wherein said gradual switching control means gradually changes ~~decreases~~ said present torque to said target torque when the difference between said present and target torques is more than said predetermined valve at the time of the switching

of said drive mode and when the traveling speed of said vehicle is equal to or more than a predetermined medium speed.

Claim 4 (Currently Amended): A control device for a front-and-rear drive wheel vehicle for electrically controlling a driving power transmission device which is arranged on a driving power transmission path of said vehicle for transmitting the drive power from a power source to driven wheels as either of front wheels and rear wheels of said vehicle, said control device including:

switching control means for electrically controlling said driving power transmission device to switch the drive mode of said vehicle selectively ~~[[to]]~~ from a two-wheel drive mode ~~[[or]]~~ to a four-wheel drive mode;

switching inhibiting means for inhibiting the drive mode of said vehicle from being switched to a commanded one of said drive modes when said vehicle is traveling at a lower speed than a predetermined value and when the rotational speed difference between front and rear wheels is larger than a predetermined difference;

means for determining a difference between a present torque which said driving power transmission device is transmitting and a target torque which said driving power transmission device is to transmit after the switching of said drive mode; and

gradual switching control means responsive to said difference determining means for electrically controlling said driving power transmission device to gradually change ~~decrease~~ the present torque to the target torque only when the difference between said present and target torques is more than a predetermined value at the time of the switching of said drive mode.

Claim 5 (Currently Amended): The control device for a front-and-rear wheel drive vehicle as set forth in Claim 4, wherein said gradual switching control means gradually changes ~~decreases~~ said present torque to said target torque when the difference between said present and target torques is more than said predetermined value at the time of the switching of said drive mode and when the traveling speed of said vehicle is equal to or more than a predetermined medium speed.

Claim 6 (Cancelled).

Claim 7 (Currently Amended): The control device for a front-and-rear wheel drive vehicle as set forth in Claim 2, further including:

lamp control means for selectively turning on or off a drive mode lamp which is provided on the vehicle to indicate the drive mode of said vehicle being presently selected, said lamp control means being operable to blink said drive mode lamp while said gradual switching control means gradually changes ~~decreases~~ said present torque to said target torque.

Claim 8 (Currently Amended): The control device for a front-and-rear wheel drive vehicle as set forth in Claim 4, further including:

lamp control means for selectively turning on or off a drive mode lamp which is provided on the vehicle to indicate the drive mode of said vehicle being presently selected, said lamp control means being operable to blink said drive mode lamp while said gradual switching control means gradually changes ~~decreases~~ said present torque to said target torque.